

**Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
Natural Resource Commission
Zoom Meeting
August 12, 2020**

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman, John Keshick III;

Roll Call: Chairman, John Keshick III; Vice-Chairman, Renee Dillard; Commissioner, Gerald V. Chingwa; Commissioner, William R. Ortiz; and Treasurer, Frederick Holdorph;

Absent: none

NRD Staff: Director, Douglas Craven; Chief Conservation Officer, Kevin Willis; Great Lakes Fishery Program Manager, Kevin Donner; Inland Wildlife Biologist, Archie Kiogima Jr.; Inland Fisheries Biologist, William Parsons; Environmental Services Program Manager, Caroline Moellering; Treaty Rights Enhancement, Daniel Hinmon; and Office Coordinator, Debra Smithkey-Browne;

Absent: None

Guest: Regina Gasco-Bentley, LTBB Tribal Chairman; James Bransky, LTBB Tribal Attorney;

Open Ceremony – None

Public Comment opened 6:01 p.m. no public to comment;
Public Comment closed at 6:02 p.m.

NRC reviewed the Agenda

Motion made by William Ortiz, Commissioner; to approve the agenda as Presented; Gerald Chingwa, Commissioner; supports.

5 Yes 0 No 0 Absent 0 Abstained 0 Vacant

Motion Carried

Natural Resource Department Director's Report – Douglas Craven, Director

- Hip Camp working out well;
 - Line to septic needed replacement at the cabins.
 - Camp sites also doing well for rentals.
 - Looking toward camp sites at Ziibimijwang next year.
- Office are up and running;
 - Business is going good.
 - Office doors are still locked to the public, most services provided via phone calls and mail;
 - Working on Harvest Tags.
- Beaver Island Dock under water time to time, don't know what to do about it yet;
- 9-Mile should have a sign to allow bicycles to sight see;

Motion made by Frederick Holdorph, Treasurer; to approve the Natural Resource Director Verbal Report as presented by Douglas Craven, Director; supported by William Ortiz, Commissioner.

5 Yes 0 No 0 Absent 0 Abstained 0 Vacant

Motion Carried

2020 updates - 6:11 p.m. to 7:12 p.m.

7:12 p.m. James Bransky, departs meeting;

Inland Wildlife Program Report – Archie Kiogima, Biologist

Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Program August 12, 2020 – LTBB NRC Meeting – InlandFWP Report

Meeting

- Deer Camera Study Zoom Meeting
 - July 20
- Virtual IFC Meeting
 - July 23

Inland Fisheries

- Arctic Grayling Restoration Project
 - Habitat Assessment @ Van and Cold Creeks – July 29
 - Maple River – August 11-14
- Juvenile Sturgeon Visual Survey @ Upper Black River Mouth
 - August 3, 5 & 6

Wildlife

- Beaver & Garden Islands Deer Camera Project
 - Camera setup during week of July 13 – 16 and July 24 and 31
- Wood Turtle Surveys
 - Upper Black River – Highbank hatchling turtle trap
 - Radio Telemetry Ongoing

Conservation, Forestry & Invasive Species

- Tree Maintenance at Ziibimijwang Farm
 - Ongoing
- Forestry Compartment Reviews (MDNR)
 - Now include comments on Marten

Motion made by Frederick Holdorph, Treasurer; to approve the Inland wildlife Program Written Report as submitted by Archie Kiogima, Biologist; supported by Gerald Chingwa, Commissioner.

5 Yes 0 No 0 Absent 0 Abstained 0 Vacant

Motion Carried

Conservation Law Enforcement Report – Kevin Willis, Chief Conservation Officer

- Bear season approaching, bait stations monitored and dog activities;
- Decommissioning the old conservation boat;

- Commission will write up a letter and submit to NRD and Accounting;
- One motor for the training boat;
- William will dispose of the boat and keep the trailer;
- LEC has not met because most tribes cannot meet in person, working on a Zoom account;
- Commission approve the Elk Season – Elk Orientation will be held on December 3, 2020;
- Blind maintenance at Ziibimijwang;

Motion made by Gerald Chingwa, Commissioner; to approve the Conservation Law Enforcement Program Written Report as submitted by Kevin Willis, Chief Conservation Officer; supported by William Ortiz, Commissioner.

5 Yes 0 No 0 Absent 0 Abstained 0 Vacant
Motion Carried

Great Lakes Fishery Program Report – Kevin Donner, Great Lakes Fishery Biologist

Events

- Katherine Skubik (Great Lakes Fish Tech) is leaving to finish her Masters at CMU End date:8/17

Research/Management

- Continuing Research/Projects
 - Finished ageing whitefish for the MI SCAA Model
 - Hydroacoustic prey fish survey of LTB to begin this week
 - Prepared equipment and boat to begin pilot study of lake whitefish early life history and zooplankton composition
 - Continuing joint GLFT project (Importance of food and predators to Lake Whitefish and Cisco recruitment in Lake Michigan)
 - Continuing joint GLFT project (Whitefish Spawning in Eastern Lake Michigan Tributaries)
 - Began prepping samples for the Lake Michigan stable isotope study in partnership with MiDNR
 - Fisheries database update.
 - Continued commercial sampling in Lakes Michigan and Superior

Hatchery

- *Lake Sturgeon*
 - On July 26th 100 Lake Sturgeon were transferred from the MDNR Hatchery on Black River to LTBB's facility. These fish will be used for the Nmé in the Classroom Program for the LTBB, GTB, and State of Michigan programs. The fish that will not be going to classrooms will be stocked into the Sturgeon River once they reach stocking size. Sturgeon for Tomorrow is supplying the bloodworms for all of the transferred sturgeon.
 - *Nmé Program*
 - Nmé in the Classroom 2020
 - Due to Coronavirus Closures not all schools will be participating in the program. Those schools that do will receive a fish from our facility. Currently, The Children's House in TC, Alanson, and Rapid City are holding off until

2021 to receive another fish. As of August 10th Pellston, High School was still expected to receive a fish, along with one of the GTB schools. We are awaiting the final word from the State of Michigan on how many and which schools are participating this year.

- Between the Care Guide Presentation and Sturgeon Distribution, LTBB has not only become the center of this program but created a situation where this program can grow across the state.

- *Research Projects:*

o A Cisco Common Garden Experiment

- The experiment has reached the phase where the three groups of cisco will be combined into the same tanks within the next 3 weeks.
- The hatchery staff finished PIT tagging the fish August 24th and are waiting 10 days to determine if the fish are still healthy and retained the PIT tag before combining the fish into the same tanks.
- The fish will be split evenly into 3 tanks for the remainder of the experiment (until the fish reach maturity), data will be collected from each fish prior to the combination.

- *Construction Projects*

o Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS):

- Currently the RAS is up and running and the experimental Cisco mentioned above are on full reuse water.
- The RAS is fully operational except for electrical work to tie the system into our SCADA control system.
 - This tie-in will give the hatchery staff control over the feeders, water quality, water flow, and alarms to notify the staff of any issues that arise.
 - The connection to the current SCADA interface has encountered some issues, as the old interface has firmware that is not compatible with any system in operation. So, a new interface is required. In addition, a new dialer is required. These changes are likely going to increase the contract amount by ~\$9,000.

- *Walleye Restoration and Preservation in Northern Michigan*

o 2020 Walleye Fingerling Production

- Just as in 2019, we received fry from Sault Tribe in 2020. The fry was received May 11th and several days later on May 13th many dead larval fish were observed along the shoreline (1,000s). It is difficult to ascertain the reason for this mortality, as the water quality was perfect and the fish were fresh to the ponds. The only explanation staff can come up with is that the fish were not finding enough zooplankton upon their arrival and they quickly starved. This is in contrast to our most recent production years where the fry was on the same timeline and had enough food.
- In 2021, the ponds will be started on a specific date, April 12th. This date was selected by the average date the Sault Tribe

conducts their egg collections (which has been very consistent), and the number of weeks it takes for the rotifers (small zooplankton for Walleye fry) to BOOM. The identification of the precise timeline on the rotifer boom this year was in part because staff were able to sample water chemistry more and more precisely than in years past. Staff sampled enough to find the precise amount of fertilizer to keep the ponds at an optimum nutrient level. Fertilizing at an optimum amount allows for the zooplankton population growths to become more predictable. In addition to starting on a specific date, we will be trying to leave some water in the ponds throughout the year. This is because we are observing lower diversity of zooplankton through our rearing cycle, lower than other Walleye ponds in the area. Typically, ponds should progress through 3 stages each spring: Rotifers, Cladocerans (daphnia, bosmina, etc.), and Copepods (Calinoids, Cyclopoids, and Harpacticoids). For the past several years the LTBB ponds are only observing rotifers and daphnia. We are unsure as to the exact reason, but we believe that we are observing a founders effect. Many ponds, such as Sault Tribe, use a creek or surface water source for their ponds. This brings the zooplankton into the pond naturally, and their ponds tend to observe an accelerated spring cycle. Staff are hopeful that by leaving some water in the ponds through the fall and winter, we will retain some zooplankton and mimic the surface water situation.

Upcoming Events and Meetings

Motion made by Gerald Chingwa, Commissioner; to approve the Great Lakes Fishery Program Report Written Report as submitted by, Kevin Donner, Great Lakes Fishery Biologist; supported by Frederick Holdorff, Treasurer.

5 Yes 0 No 0 Absent 0 Abstained 0 Vacant

Motion Carried

Environmental Services Program Report – Caroline Moellering

- ESP fully staffed, most working from home;
- Intern done
- Insite planning and permitting, and policies for site planning;
 - Project coordinator required to consult with ESP to learn about all of the environmental permits that must be applied for;
 - ESP staff will not visit every site unless there is reason;
 - Jon working with mapping, testing of manoomin;
- Water Quality
 - First phase at Victories Square
- Traven
 - Cross Village sites cleaned up in the near future;
- Carrie
 - Reports for the Lake Huron Lamprey;
 - Up to date on Line 5 and the proposed tunnel;
 - Anchor supports.

- Some of the old supports will not be taken out;
- Law judge to public service commission granted all those interveners will be able to provide input for the tunnel on line 5;

Motion made by William Ortiz, Commissioner; to approve the Environmental Services Program Written Report as submitted by Caroline Moellering, Environmental Services Program Manager; supported by Gerald Chingwa, Commissioner.

5 Yes 0 No 0 Absent 0 Abstained 0 Vacant

Motion Carried

Treaty Rights Enhancement Program Report – Daniel Hinmon, Treaty Rights Enhancement Specialist

- Blind was put up at Ziibimijwang;
- One on Osborn Road property will also have a blind put up;
- Ammo ordered, shortage of ammo;
- Shed mostly completed;
- Manoomin not very good at French Farm
- Crooked trees at NRD
- Hunter Safety may not be possible with all of the Covid-19 guidelines;
- Hoping to get out and harvest rice;
- Annual hunt – looking at options for the hunt;
- Birch bark canoe, at the hatchery but must have drifted down stream – need to get out and look at for it;
- Community Hunt, must have a family member with them due to the covid-19 current guidelines;

Motion made by Gerald Chingwa, Commissioner; to approve the Treaty Rights Enhancement Program Written Report as submitted by Daniel Hinmon, Treaty Rights Enhancement Specialist; supported by w, Commissioner.

5 Yes 0 No 0 Absent 0 Abstained 0 Vacant

Motion Carried

Commissioner's Report – Commissioners

- Hot spots and laptop – out of Covid-19 funds

Motion made by William Ortiz, Commissioner; to approve the Natural Resource Commission verbal report as presented by commissioners; supported by, Frederick Holdorph, Treasurer.

5 Yes 0 No 0 Absent 0 Abstained 0 Vacant

Motion Carried

Discussion and review were held on the LTBB Elk Permit Policy, suggested that there be a separate Elder Only Drawing held and the chances would then be submitted back into the overall drawing for the additional Elk Permits for all applicants. It is also suggested that an successful Elder Elk harvester to wait 3 years to reapply rather than 5 years.

Discussion and review were held on the LTBB Black Lake System Sturgeon Harvest Policy, suggested that the successful harvester wait period be moved from 3 years to either 1 year of no waiting period for the harvester.

Discussion and review were held on the LTBB Bear Permits and submitted Bear Applications and Bear Management Units requested by the applicants. Will LTBB NRC hold a drawing for the Bear management Units; will applicants be allowed to submit applications after the deadline of August 1, 2020 be allowed to pick up a Harvest Tag for requested unit.

Motion made by William Ortiz, Commissioner; to approve the LTBB Bear Permit Harvest tags for requested bear management units according to 2019; Frederick Holdorph, Treasurer.

5 Yes 0 No 0 Absent 0 Abstained 0 Vacant

Motion Carried

Discussion was held CWD Reward Program will this be available for the 2020 upcoming season. This will

Public Comment opened at 8:33 p.m.

Public Comment closed at 8:34 p.m.

Motion made by William Ortiz, Commissioner; to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.; supported by; Renee Dillard, Vice-Chairman.

5 Yes 0 No 0 Absent 0 Abstained 0 Vacant

Motion Carried

Next scheduled meeting will be held on August 26, 2020

Approved:

Renee Dillard, Vice-Chairman

Date